

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 100

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 3

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 100—Relative to teen dating violence.

[Filed with Secretary of State February 26, 2010.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 100, Jones. Teen dating violence.

This measure would recognize the month of February 2010 as “National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month” and would encourage all Californians to observe the month with appropriate programs and activities that promote awareness and prevention of the crime of teen dating violence in their communities.

WHEREAS, Teenage dating violence is a serious and growing problem throughout California; and

WHEREAS, Dating, domestic, and sexual violence affects women regardless of their age, and teens and young women are especially vulnerable; and

WHEREAS, Approximately one in three adolescent girls in the United States is a victim of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner, a figure that far exceeds victimization rates for other types of violence affecting youth; and

WHEREAS, Nationwide, one in 10 high school students (9.9 percent) has been hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend; and

WHEREAS, More than one in four teenagers have been in a relationship where a partner is verbally abusive; and

WHEREAS, Twenty percent of teen girls exposed to physical dating violence did not attend school because the teen girls felt unsafe, either at school or on the way to or from school, on one or more occasions in a 30-day period; and

WHEREAS, In a study of California high school pupils, 7 percent of 11th graders indicated that they were victims of teenage dating violence within the last 12 months; and

WHEREAS, Violent relationships during adolescence can have serious ramifications for victims by putting the victims at higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, suicide, and adult revictimization; and

WHEREAS, Being physically and sexually abused leaves teen girls up to six times more likely to become pregnant and more than twice as likely to report having a sexually transmitted disease; and

WHEREAS, Nearly three out of four children between 11 and 14 years of age (referred to hereafter as “tweens”), say that dating relationships usually begin at 14 years of age or younger, and about 72 percent of 8th and 9th grade pupils report “dating”; and

WHEREAS, One out of five tweens say their friends are victims of dating violence and nearly half of tweens who are in relationships know friends who are verbally abused; and

WHEREAS, More than three times as many tweens (20 percent) as parents of tweens (6 percent) admit that parents know little or nothing about the dating relationships of tweens; and

WHEREAS, Teen dating abuse most often takes place in the home of one of the partners; and

WHEREAS, A majority of parents surveyed believe they have had a conversation with their teen about what it means to be in a healthy relationship, but the majority of teens surveyed said that they have not had a conversation about dating abuse with a parent in the past year; and

WHEREAS, Digital abuse and “sexting,” the electronic distribution of pictures, videos, or text messages that are sexually explicit, are becoming new frontiers for teen dating abuse; and

WHEREAS, One out of four teens in a relationship say they have been called names, harassed, or put down by their partner through the use of cell phones or texting; and

WHEREAS, Three out of 10 young people have sent or received nude pictures of other young people on their cell phone or online, and 61 percent who have “sexted” report being pressured to do so at least once; and

WHEREAS, Targets of digital abuse are almost three times as likely to contemplate suicide as those who have not encountered such abuse (8 percent vs. 3 percent), and targets of digital abuse are nearly three times more likely to have considered dropping out of school; and

WHEREAS, The severity of violence among intimate partners has been shown to be greater in cases where the pattern of violence has been established during adolescence; and

WHEREAS, Primary prevention programs are a key part of addressing teen dating violence, and many successful community examples include, but are not limited to, education, community outreach, and social marketing campaigns that also understand the cultural appropriateness of programs; and

WHEREAS, Skilled assessment and intervention programs are also necessary for youth victims and abusers; and

WHEREAS, The establishment of a National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month will benefit schools, communities, families, and all youth; and

WHEREAS, Governmental organizations, private organizations, and public officials, as well as families and youth, must work together to raise awareness of the high incidence of teen dating violence and to promote prevention strategies; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature recognizes the month of February 2010 as “National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month”; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature supports communities in empowering teens to develop healthy and violence-free relationships; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature encourages all Californians to observe National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month with appropriate programs and activities that promote awareness and prevention of the crime of teen dating violence in their communities; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.